



State of South Carolina
Office of The Lieutenant Governor

André Bauer
Lieutenant Governor

Office on Aging
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Director

For Immediate Release:

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Lt. Governor André Bauer to Introduce Volunteer Ombudsman Program

Spartanburg S.C. – Lt. Governor André Bauer will join officials from the Appalachia Area Agency on Aging and representatives from the South Carolina Health Care Association, the AARP and the South Carolina Silver Haired Legislature at the Mountain View Nursing Home in Spartanburg Friday (**February 17, 2006**) at 10:00 AM to visit with residents and introduce the new Volunteer Long Term Care Ombudsman program initiated by the Lt. Governor's Office on Aging.

"I am extremely excited about the potential this program has for enhancing our system of long term care," said Bauer. "And we were able to accomplish this by working together with the long term care industry to create a voluntary system instead of adding a new layer of regulation and bureaucracy."

Recruitment and training of community volunteers for the new program began last year. Spartanburg county's two volunteers will serve as friendly visitors in participating nursing homes and other long term care facilities and as the "eyes and ears" of the professional ombudsman staff in the Appalachia region. An estimated 60 percent of nursing home resident rarely receive a visitor, and a feeling of separation from the outside community is a common complaint among nursing home residents. The volunteers will serve as advocates for residents and help to identify minor problems or complaints and resolve them informally with staff or administrators before they become more serious. Program managers anticipate that the number of volunteers and facilities participating in the program statewide will continue to grow.

Mountain View Nursing Home is located at 340 Cedar Springs Road off Highway 56 in Spartanburg. For more information, background or directions, please contact David Lucas in the Lt. Governor's Office on Aging at (803) 734-9917.

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